

VZCZCXRO1560
OO RUEHIK RUEHPOD RUEHYG
DE RUEHSL #0089 0601557
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 291557Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1554
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0674
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000089

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NCE, DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL LO

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT BACKS AWAY FROM PROBLEMATIC NGO LAW

REF: A) BRATISLAVA 28 B) BRATISLAVA 8 C) BRATISLAVA 1

¶1. (SBU) In a February 27 meeting with NGO leaders, Interior Minister Kalinak acknowledged that the government's draft law on NGOs was flawed and tasked NGO lawyers to produce a mututally satisfactory draft within two weeks. The NGOs plan to draft an amendment to the existing 1990 law that would address the government's desire to establish an NGO registry, limit the number of legal forms for NGOs, and more precisely define NGO economic activities. Although Kalinak has always stressed the need for a wholly new (read: Slovak) law, NGO leaders tell us that they believe he will accept this approach. Marcel Zajac, one of the NGO participants in the meeting, thanked Emboff for the Embassy's engagement in the issue. Zajac said the Embassy's intervention had played a critical role in shaping the government's response. He added that Minister Kalinak and Deputy Prime Minister Caplovic had "heard your views," and, as result, had been more willing to listen and cooperate. (Comment: We will continue to monitor the process, but believe that the tide has turned decisively in favor of a process that will produce a balanced law consistent with European standards. End Comment.)

OBSITNIK